

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) Strapping machine comprising

a strap extension, retrieval and pulling unit having a motor rotating in only one direction and a powered main wheel around which a strap winds partially for powered movement of the strap in opposite directions,

two alternatively selectable mechanisms for transmission of movement from the motor to the main wheel with the first mechanism causing rotation of the main wheel at a first speed and rotation of an auxiliary traction wheel which is pressed against the main wheel with interposition of the strap near an input zone of the strap on the main wheel to effect pulling of the strap and the second mechanism causing rotation in opposite directions of the main wheel at a second speed greater than the first speed to effect extension and retrieval of the strap while the auxiliary traction wheel is at a distance from the main wheel, and

a control device operating alternately the first mechanism and the second mechanism to realize in rapid succession extension, retrieval and pulling of the strap.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended) Machine in accordance with claim 1, wherein the first mechanism comprises a lever on which is mounted the auxiliary ~~pulling~~

traction wheel and which is movable on command of lever handling means between a first non-operational position in which the auxiliary ~~pulling~~ traction wheel is moved away from the main wheel and a second operational position in which the auxiliary ~~pulling~~ traction wheel is pressed against the main wheel.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended) ~~Machine in accordance with claim 2, wherein~~  
Strapping machine comprising

a strap extension, retrieval and pulling unit having a motor and a powered main wheel around which a strap winds partially for powered movement of the strap in opposite directions,

two selectable mechanisms for transmission of movement from the motor to the main wheel with the first mechanism causing rotation of the main wheel at a first speed and rotation of an auxiliary traction wheel which is pressed against the main wheel with interposition of the strap near an input zone of the strap on the main wheel to effect pulling of the strap and the second mechanism causing rotation in opposite directions of the main wheel at a second speed greater than the first speed to effect extension and retrieval of the strap while the auxiliary traction wheel is at a distance from the main wheel, and

a control device operating alternately the first mechanism and the second mechanism to realize in rapid succession extension, retrieval and pulling of the strap,  
the first mechanism including a lever on which is mounted the auxiliary traction wheel and which is movable on command of lever handling means between a first non-operational position in which the auxiliary traction wheel is moved away from the main wheel and a second operational position in which the auxiliary traction wheel is pressed against the main wheel,

the auxiliary ~~pulling~~ traction wheel is being connected to a motion transmission for rotation and ~~has~~ having a shaft connected to a first gear ~~which engages~~ engaging in a rotation gear of the main wheel when the lever is moved to the operational position.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) Machine in accordance with claim 3, wherein motion transmission of the auxiliary ~~pulling~~ traction wheel includes a second gear connected to a shaft of the auxiliary wheel and which engages a powered gear.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 4, wherein a first pair made up of the first gear of the auxiliary wheel and the gear for rotation of the main wheel has a module of teeth which is lower than a module of teeth of a

second pair made up of the second gear of the auxiliary wheel and the powered gear so as to hold the teeth of the second pair in contact even when the lever is moved into the non-operational position.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 3, wherein the lever handling means include a cam mechanism for thrusting the lever towards the operational position with predetermined adjustable force.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 6, wherein the lever handling means also include an electromagnet device for effecting a first partial movement from the non-operational position towards the operational position until engagement of the teeth of the first gear in the teeth of the rotation gear of the main wheel.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) Machine in accordance with claim 7, wherein the control device commands in sequence first the electromagnetic device to effect engagement movement of the teeth of the first gear in the teeth of the rotation gear of the main wheel and then the cam mechanism to press the auxiliary ~~pulling~~ traction wheel against the main wheel with predetermined force.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 6, wherein the second mechanism includes two gears arranged in series with one of the two gears engaging in a rotation gear of the main wheel and with the two gears being powered through respective clutches engageable on command to cause rotation of the main wheel in one direction or another direction depending on which of the respective clutches is engaged.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 1, further comprising another auxiliary wheel which presses the strap with predetermined force against the main wheel in a position near an outlet zone of the strap from the main wheel to produce a desired traction on the strap during the extension step.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented) Machine in accordance with claim 1, further comprising another intermediate auxiliary wheel which presses the strap with predetermined force against the main wheel in an intermediate position along a strap winding path on the main wheel in such a manner as to produce a desired traction on the strap during the retrieval step.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended) ~~Machine in accordance with claim 11, wherein~~  
Strapping machine comprising

a strap extension, retrieval and pulling unit having a motor and a powered main wheel around which a strap winds partially for powered movement of the strap in opposite directions,

two alternatively selectable mechanisms for transmission of movement from the motor to the main wheel with the first mechanism causing rotation of the main wheel at a first speed and rotation of an auxiliary traction wheel which is pressed against the main wheel with interposition of the strap near an input zone of the strap on the main wheel to effect pulling of the strap and the second mechanism causing rotation in opposite directions of the main wheel at a second speed greater than the first speed to effect extension and retrieval of the strap while the auxiliary traction wheel is at a distance from the main wheel, and

a control device operating alternately the first mechanism and the second mechanism to realize in rapid succession extension, retrieval and pulling of the strap,

another intermediate auxiliary wheel pressing the strap with predetermined force against the main wheel in an intermediate position along a strap winding path on the main wheel in such a manner as to produce a desired traction on the strap during the retrieval step,

the intermediate auxiliary wheel ~~has~~ having a stop sensor which signals to the control device stopping of the intermediate auxiliary wheel caused by slipping of the strap on the main wheel.